

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-16 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01

CG-00 DOTE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15

CEQ-02 COA-02 COME-00 EB-11 EPA-04 IO-14 NSF-04

SCI-06 FEA-02 ACDA-19 AEC-11 AGR-20 FMC-04 INT-08

JUSE-00 OMB-01 OIC-04 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /266 W

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R 111136Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3610

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 4698

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR VS

SUBJ: LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE

REF: A. SAIGON 19448, 12/15/71, B. SAIGON 18583, 11/26/71

1. FONMINISTRY (KY) INFORMED US APRIL 11 THAT PRES HAS DECIDED TO ASK FOR OPENING OF DEBATE IN LOWER HOUSE OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON BILL TO EXTEND LIMIT OF RVN TERRITORIAL SEA FROM 3 TO 12 MILES. LOWER HOUSE DEBATE EXPECTED TO BEGIN NEXT WEEK. FONMINISTRY BELIEVES COMPLETION OF ACTION IN LOWER HOUSE AND SUBSEQUENTLY IN SENATE WILL BE QUICKLY ACCOMPLISHED. GVN DESIRES TO HAVE LAW ENACTED BY OPENING OF LOS CONFERENCE IN JUNE.

2. KY RECALLED THAT IN 1970 THE GOVT HAD SENT A DECREE LAW ESTABLISHING THE 12-MILE LIMIT TO THE LOWER HOUSE AND THAT IN AN AIDE MEMOIRE OF NOV 2, 71(REF B) WE HAD REQUESTED THAT THE GVN NOT TAKE ACTION ON THE PROPOSAL PRIOR TO THE 1973 LOS CONFERENCE. IN OUR NOTE WE HAD ARGUED THAT IF MANY COUNTRIES FIXED TERRITORIAL SEA LIMIT AT 12 MILES THE CONFERENCE WOULD BE FACED WITH FAIT
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ACCOMPLI. NOT HAD ALSO POINTED TO STRAITS PROBLEM. KY NOTED THAT

THE GVN HAD AGREED TO THE USG REQUEST (REF A) BUT THAT NOW IT WAS 1974 AND A LARGE MAJORITY OF COUNTRIES HAD ALREADY ADOPTED THE 12-MILE LIMIT. THE GVN THEREFORE FELT THAT IT HAD TO GO AHEAD NOW.

3. IN OUR VIEW THE GVN HAS BEEN MOST FOREBEARING IN DELAYING ACTION THIS LONG ON ITS PLAN TO ADOPT THE 12-MILE LIMIT. GIVEN CONTINUING MASSIVE NORTH VIET-NAM'S CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS, THE NEED FOR THE GVN TO PREVENT COMMUNIST INFILTRATION BY SEA HAS NOT DIMINISHED. U.S. PATROLLING ALONG THE COAST CEASED IN EARLY 1973 WHEN THE PARIS AGREEMENT WENT INTO EFFECT AND THE WHOLE BURDEN OF PATROLLING HAS NOW FALLEN TO THE VIETNAMESE NAVY. IT IS ASSUREDLY IN THE GVN'S INTEREST, AND OURS, THAT THERE BE NO LEGAL OBSTACLE TO ESTABLISHING THE MOST EFFECTIVE POSSIBLE ANTI-INFILTRATION MEASURES ALONG SOUTH VIET-NAM'S LONG COAST.
MARTIN

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NNN

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